The Builder.

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SATURDAY, JULY 27, 1844.

IN nothing else does the mind, whether refined or unrefined, take greater delight than in the beauties of statuary — for by nothing else is the mind more correctly informed of the history, the religion, the passions of our species: the present exhibition of statuary in Westminster Hall claims therefore, the greatest consideration from us, whether as to its own intrinsic merit or the opening of a new era in architectural art, whereby no longer is even the bald whitewashed wall deemed too costly, but embellishment is re-admitted, and superiority is called for. The chosen work of the chosen artist is to form the decoration of the Westminster Palace, and the three sister arts—architecture, sculpture, and painting—are to be united in one magnificent work.

The exhibition is highly creditable; it contains many respectable and many fine works, and is particularly pleasing, as containing not few which, in the patriotic spirit of representing our own sages, our own heroes, our own monarchs, gives it a nationality, which, eventually, will be the distinguishing excellence of the British School. All appreciate such subjects, treated in such spirit. We do not deem it necessary to give any more general observations upon the matter, but proceed to some particulars relative to these objects of art themselves.

85. Lord Bacon, by John Henning, jun.—It must be recorded to our disgrace, that the name of Bacon has been more highly appreciated and more extensively diffused by the learning of Gassendi, the admiration of Voltaire, and the critical sagacity of D'Alembert, than by any efforts of our own. Whatever in the revolution of ages may be the fate of this empire, even to that distant, but probable period, when the present continent of Europe shall exchange its civilization for the barbarity of regions now undiscovered or unexplored, in whatever corner of the globe literature and science may hereafter seek an asylum, so long will they exalt the fame, and be guided by the genius of Bacon.

This is a fine work, in the peculiar costume of the day, which outdid nature when in a funny mood.

90. Captain James Cook, R.N., F.R.S., by W. G. Nicholl.—A very proper subject for the edifice.

91. Richard I., by Charles Augustus Rivers.—A work of animation.

93. St. George and the Dragon, by Hamilton and Carleton McCarthy.—The horse of this is a fine work.

95. John Rennie, F.R.S., by C. A. Rivers.—Suitable.

100. Geoffrey Chaucer, the Father of English Poetry, by W. Calder Marshall.—A very beautiful work.

103. The Earl of Marlborough, afterwards his Grace the Great Duke of Marlborough, by Henry Sibson.

Quite out of the Gothic character; yet, though hugely booted, according to the costume of the man himself—therefore proper.

106. The Archer or Eagle-Slayer, by John Bell—"Our ancestors used the bow for a double purpose; in the time of war it was a dreadful instrument of destruction, and in peace it became an object of amusement. It will be needless to insist upon the skill of the English archers, or to mention their wonderful performances in battle."—*Strutt's Sports and Pastimes of the People of England.*

The story intended to be conveyed is, that an eagle having just slain a lamb, soars high aloft; scared from his prey by the shepherd (represented in the statue), who has just launched a successful shaft at the wide-winged robber.—A very fine work, seeming to live.

108. Milton dictating his Poem of Paradise Lost to his Daughters, by W. F. Woodington.—A good work.

111. Chaucer, by John Hancock.—A very beautifully designed production, having an air totally differing from routine performances.

113. Boadicea, Queen of the Iceni, a group, by John Henning, jun.—"But she then appeared upon the same foot as one of the vulgar, and sought vengeance for the oppression of public liberty, for the stripes inflicted upon her person, for the defilement of her virgin daughters. To such a height was the wild fury and concupiscence of the Romans advanced, that neither the persons of individuals, not even old age, nor even tender maidens could escape their rage and contamination. The incensed deities were, however, ready to aid the just sword of vengeance; by it a legion which dared to attempt an engagement had already fallen. . . . If the Britons would survey the number of men under arms; if they would well weigh the affecting cause of war; they would find that in that battle they must remain utterly victorious or utterly perish; such was the firm purpose of her who was a woman; the men, if they pleased, might still enjoy life and bondage."—*Annals of Tacitus*, book 14.

A very masterly work of art.

115. Talbot Earl of Shrewsbury (time of Henry VI.), by Charles Samuel Kelsey.

A capital architectural statue in costume and treatment, suiting the building.

117. Alfred the Great with the Book of Common Law, by Frederick S. Archer.

A very good work.

118. The Death of the Duke of York at the Battle of Agincourt, by Benjamin E. Spence.

"Upon these words I came and cheer'd him up:
He smil'd me in the face, raught me his hand,
And with a feeble gripe says—Dear, my lord,
Commend my services to my sovereign."
—*Vide* SHAKSPERE'S HENRY V.

An artistic specimen of exquisite feeling.

120. Alfred the Great, by James Sherwood Westmacott.

Good and suitable in design and execution.

123. Portrait Statue of Robert Burns, by David Dunbar, jun.

A worthy morsel of art.

124. Sir Isaac Newton, by William Jackson.—Simply, yet finely treated.

129. The Mourners; representing a wife, who, during the civil wars of York and Lancaster, has followed her husband to the field of battle, and discovers his lifeless body among the slain, his charger standing over him. By T. G. Lough.

After passing a file of good, of fine, of even very fine productions, this wonderful piece of art breaks upon the view, and the longer the sight rests upon it, the longer view does it desire.—The heroic slain, who has not fallen till the sturdy wood of his battle-axe brake under his prowess, seems in death a conqueror: the bereaved lady pictures a fine mixture of heart-break, pride in her husband's prowess, of grief and admiring love: the noble charger, faithful to its master, remaining there in death, as in life, with the beautiful widowed face almost leaning in companionship upon it, breathes through the stolid material in audible passion. How fine, how touching does art become, when, leaving the ineffective restraints of conventionalism, it dares to assume, that perfect art can take no flight higher than the perfect beauty which God himself has set in the feature, the limb, the muscle, the action, the breath, with which, after his own image, he has endued nature in all her works!

131. Cardinal Wolsey, by Thomas Grimsley, "Farewell, a long farewell, to all my greatness."

A beautiful cabinet statue, with its hands silently clasped in bitterness.

132. Sir Isaac Newton, by Edwin Gahagan.—The first idea of universal gravitation was suggested to Sir Isaac Newton (in his 24th year) by the fall of an apple.—"A new idea darted across his mind. Why, he asked himself, may not this power extend to the moon, and then what more would be necessary to retain her in her orbit round the earth?"—*Library of Useful Knowledge.*

Wonderfully fine—indeed exquisite—quiet, yet evidently all soul; though evidently worked out in only rude matter.

133. Milton reciting to his Daughters, by James Legrew.

Of perfect beauty, elegant, soul-like, wanting nothing in design, or execution, or finish.

134. Jane Shore, by John Bell.

"Look on her now, behold her where she wanders,
With no one hand to help; and tell me, then,
If ever misery were known like her's?
* * * * *
Somewhere about this quarter of the town,
I hear the poor abandoned creature lingers;
Her guard, tho' set with strictest watch to keep
All food and friendship from her, yet permit her
To wander in the streets, there choose her bed,
And rest her head on what cold stone she pleases."
ROWE'S TRAGEDY OF JANE SHORE, Act 5.

A very beautiful figure, not spoiled by being over short.

135. Bede, the Saxon Ecclesiastical Writer, by Charles Samuel Kelsey.

Thoughtful, but too coarsely managed to reach ideal beauty.

137. Richard Cœur de Lion planting the Standard of England on the Walls of Acre, 12th July, 1191, by James Sherwood Westmacott.

A very beautiful work; the more meritorious from being free from the mere matter-of-fact of conventionalism.

139. Edward I. creating a Knight Banneret. The dying man still retains the banner in his grasp and is supported by a trooper, while the King, who comes up at the moment, is in the act of conferring on him the honour of knighthood; the horse of the dying man is also mortally wounded by a spear in his throat. By T. G. Lough.

A very beautifully executed horse—the dying man of speaking effect; the figures of the prince and the trooper less striking; but the monarch's horse, stumbling over a dead mailed warrior, exhibits the highest art.

140. Richard I., King of England, surnamed Cœur de Lion, by James Wyatt.—"The Christian adventurers, under his command, determined to besiege the renowned city of Ascalon, in order to prepare the way for attacking Jerusalem with greater advantage. Saladin, the most renowned of all the Saracen monarchs, was resolved to dispute their march, and placed himself upon the road with an army of 300,000 men. This was a day equal to Richard's wishes, this an enemy worthy his highest ambition. The English Crusaders were victorious. Richard, when the wings of his army were defeated, led on the main body in person, and restored the battle."—*Goldsmith's History of England*, vol. i., p. 263.

Of considerable beauty.

141. Margaret of Anjou and her Son meeting the Robber after the Battle of Hexham, by John A. P. Mac Bride.—"Margaret, the wife of Henry VI., after her defeat at Hexham, fled, accompanied only by her son. She was met in a forest by some robbers, who stripped her of her jewels, and treated her with great indignity. The division of this rich booty caused a quarrel amongst them, and she took the opportunity of escaping still further into the forest, when, overcome by hunger and fatigue, she met another robber, who approached her with a drawn sword in his hand; anxious only for her child, and with the courage and dignity which never forsook her, she advanced and said, 'Hold, my friend, save the son of thy king.'"

Quiet, yet speaking more passionately than all the outward hard working of muscle, fixed eye, and stiffened features.

144. Caractacus before Claudius Cæsar, with his Wife and Child, by W. Spence.—A fine group.

147. A Portrait Statue of Lady Emily,

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